



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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“For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev 1:9)

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Paradise Created

*By Dr Guy Prentiss Waters, Part 2 of 4 of “Paradise Lost and Regained”
Adapted from TABLETALK from Ligonier Ministries – December 2008*

Even people who are not familiar with the Bible have heard of Adam and Eve. Perhaps they have seen Michelangelo’s Creation of Adam or have read John Milton’s Paradise Lost. Many, however, also know that Adam and Eve play an important role in the opening chapters of the Bible. Some also know that the Bible teaches that Adam had something to do with the evil and misery that we witness in the world and in ourselves every day. Just what did Adam do? How did his action come to affect us and our daily lives? Let us turn to the Bible for some answers.

The biblical account of the creation tells us that after God created man, He declared all His works on the sixth day “very good” (Gen 1:31). In other words, God created Adam good. As Solomon puts it: “God made man upright” (Eccl 7:29). God created Adam righteous and without sin. From the beginning, Adam flawlessly observed the law of God written upon his heart (Rom 2:14-15).

Having created Adam, God placed Adam in the garden of Eden and established with him what has been called a covenant of works or covenant of life.

Before we look more closely at Genesis 2, let us ask a basic question: What is a covenant? Part of the difficulty in answering this question is that we do not often see covenants in modern society. Nevertheless, we do have them. Some states, for instance, have what is called covenant marriage.” Some neighbourhoods require homeowners to sign a “covenant” in order to live in that community.

What, then, is a covenant? Put simply, a covenant is a solemn agreement between two or more parties. That agreement stipulates conditions that the parties agree to fulfil. Those conditions are frequently accompanied by promised blessings (to encourage obedience) and by threatened punishments, often called sanctions (to discourage transgressions).

This is precisely what we see in Genesis 2. God approaches Adam and commands him: “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen 2:16b-17). The parties to this covenant are God and Adam. The condition of the covenant is Adam’s ongoing obedience to this special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The consequence for disobedience is death. Had Adam obeyed, we may surmise, he would have received the blessing of ongoing, confirmed, and uninterrupted “life” – holiness and communion with God.

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Consequently, even though Moses does not use the word covenant in Genesis 2, we may fairly conclude that God entered into a covenant with Adam in the garden of Eden. Theologians have called this arrangement the covenant of works. They do so because the outcome of the covenant hinged on Adam's obedience or disobedience to the commandments of God.

We need to add an important qualification to the statement that God and Adam were parties to the covenant of works. Adam is party to the covenant of works, but not as a private person. In other words, his actions were not only his own but also his posterity's.

The apostle Paul develops this point in Romans 5:12-20. Adam's descendants die because their representative, Adam, broke the covenant of works by sin. In verse 12 we read: "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned." Paul has in mind here the "one trespass" of the "one man" (Adam, see verses 15-17). How is it, then, that "all sinned" because of the one sin of Adam? It is not, Paul says, that Adam's descendants have followed Adam's bad example – imitating his sin and becoming sinners in that fashion (v. 14). Rather, the apostle says, "through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners" (v. 19a, author's translation). Adam's posterity is responsible for or guilty of the sin of Adam their representative. The guilt of Adam's first sin is transferred or "imputed" to them. Someone might ask, "Is this just?" The answer is yes. God was just in imputing Adam's sin to his posterity because Adam was their divinely-appointed representative.

We must note that when Paul says that "all sinned" in Adam, he does not mean that Adam's sin was imputed to Jesus. This is because Adam did not represent Jesus. Jesus, rather, is the "second Adam." Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, Jesus was without sin.

If Adam's one sin has been imputed to his posterity, what does this mean for people as sons and daughters of Adam? We may point to four things.

First, the imputation of Adam's sin means that people are guilty of Adam's first sin. The "one trespass [of Adam] led to condemnation for all men" in Adam (v.18). You and I, from the moment of our conception, stand justly condemned in the sight of God.

Second, the imputation of Adam's sin means that people are naturally depraved or sinful. Because in Adam they are guilty, they are punished with depraved natures. They lack the moral and spiritual goodness with which Adam was made. By nature our whole person is in bondage to sin. We sin and can do nothing but sin – "none is righteous, no, not one" (3:10). Further, sin reaches down to the very "thoughts of [the] heart" – the innermost recesses of our person. As Jesus taught, sin springs from sinful heart (Matt. 7:17-18; 15:19). We are not sinners because we sin. We sin because we are sinners by nature.

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Sadly, this condition is true of us from the moment of our conception (Ps. 51:5). As the late Dr John H. Gerstner often reminded his hearers, Scripture tells us that infants emerge from the womb as “wicked vipers.” The birth of a child is a rightly an occasion for joy and celebration. It is also a sombre reminder that we enter the world as already guilty and depraved persons.

Third, the imputation of Adam’s sin means that people are estranged from God and hostile to Him. Before Adam sinned, he had fellowship with God. We see Adam standing in the presence of God, wherein God speaks to him (Gen. 2:15-17). After Adam sins, however, he tries to hide himself from God (3:8). This is true of every fallen child of Adam. Even though he knows God’s “invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature...in things that have been made,” he turns his thoughts and worship to dead idols rather than the living God. Scripture says “no one seeks for God” (Rom. 3:11) and “the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God” (8:7).

Fourth, the imputation of Adam’s sin means that people are subject to death. Death, after all, is sin’s “wage” (6:23). “Death spread to all men because all sinned” (5:12). Death, sickness, and injury are daily, grim reminders of man’s guilt in Adam. Moreover, the death that you and I witness in this fallen world is not the end of the story. The Bible tells us that “the second death” (Rev. 21:8) awaits the impenitent – when sinners are sent to a place of torment and misery to be punished eternally for their sins.

What more does the covenant of works have to say to Christians today? First, the Bible’s teaching on the covenant of works shows us mankind’s true spiritual condition. The unrenewed sinner has no desire or inclination to turn to God. How important it is for us to remember this when we evangelise our unbelieving friends and neighbours. It can be tempting to think that the unbeliever has some innate disposition to respond positively to the gospel. If only we use the right techniques, say just the right words, lay before him the best incentives, then surely that person will come to Christ! The covenant of works, however, reminds us that our very best labours in sharing the gospel can meet with spiritual success only if the Spirit of God is first pleased to open the sinner’s heart, giving new life to the dead.

Second, the covenant of works teaches us that salvation can only be by the grace of God. Sin means that we are debtors to God’s justice. God owes us nothing except His everlasting wrath. If salvation comes to a sinner, then it must be by divine grace. We must never think that God has saved us because we in any way have deserved salvation.

Finally, the covenant of works teaches us that salvation cannot come by the hand of any ordinary son or daughter of Adam. The good news of the Bible is that salvation has come only through the work of the sinless Son of God, Jesus Christ, the last Adam. What a comfort it is to the believer to know that his eternal standing rests on this secure, unshakable foundation. This very truth is the song of heaven now (Rev 5:9). Is it your song?

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm.**

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
Morning	<i>Today: 16/08/2009</i>	<i>Next Week: 23/08/2009</i>	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We like to welcome Joseph Defesh and Nazil Khalil to our worship services last Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Rev Timothy Ki	Rev Timothy Ki	
<i>Message:</i>	How can I be a Christian? – Part 1	Faith and Christian – Part 1	
<i>Text:</i>	Acts 16:25-34	Hebrews 11:1	
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Anthony	
Evening			NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Jonathan Kim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calling of Resident Minister: Continue to pray for the Lord's calling for Rev Timothy Ki to serve as our resident minister. Rev Ki & Mrs Ki will be returning to Australia on the 24th August. Pray for journey mercies and his visa application. • DHW Bible Study today: Today, we will cover Lesson 14 (Genesis 20). Please spend the upcoming week preparing for Lesson 15 (Genesis 21). • Pray for those who are sick: - Yetta's mum (upcoming chemotherapy sessions), Constance (ankle), Douglas (knee pain), Barbara (Alzheimer's), Prema (thyroid and skin condition), Eld Jack Ford (old age and knees), Margaret (Asthma, Hay fever, lost her voice), Brian (awaiting appointment for wisdom tooth extraction). • Pray for those who are on travel: Sophia, Lee-Wei, Grace (S'pore), Nicolas (Belgium). • Pray for those who are still progressing with their studies: Yetta, Hubert, Joshua • Pray for those seeking employment: Joy • Pray for visa applications: Grace (China and UK), Joshua (Student visa), Joy (Post studies visa) • Pray for the upcoming UK Students meeting in Singapore on the 12th September at New Life BP Church.
<i>Preacher:</i>	Rev Timothy Ki	Rev Timothy Ki	
<i>Message:</i>	How can I be a Christian? – Part 2	Faith and Christian – Part 2	
<i>Text:</i>	1 Corinthians 15:1-4	Hebrews 11:6	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Hubert	Joy	
Other Duties			
	<i>Today: 16/08/2009</i>	<i>Next Week: 23/08/2009</i>	
<i>Ushers</i>	Jonathan / Yetta	Joey / Joy	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	No Sunday School	No Sunday School	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Mrs Ki	Constance	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>PA Crew:</i>	Brian	Joshua	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 21 Aug	7:30pm	Young Adults Fellowship: No YAF	
Sat 22 Aug	4:00pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Led by Jonathan Kim	
<u>Worship Service Collections</u>			
Offering: £486.50		Lunch: £31.00	
<h2 style="text-decoration: underline;">Working By Faith</h2>			
<i>Adapted from "In Green Pastures" by J.R. Miller, D.D.</i>			
<p>Faith links a man to Christ, so that he is no more a mere common man, with only his own poor feeble strength, but is more than a man — a man whom Christ is using, behind whom Christ's omnipotent energy is working. We must yield ourselves altogether to God and let him use us. Then his power, his wisdom, his skill, his thoughts, his love shall flow through our souls, our brains, our hearts, and our fingers. That is working by faith. It is simply putting our life into God's hand to be used, as one uses a pen to write or a brush to paint or a chisel to carve the statue.</p>			